

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 SANTIAGO 08668 241832Z

64

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01

USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 L-03 DHA-02 ORM-02 IO-10 EUR-12

/057 W

----- 025642

R 241652Z DEC 75

FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6323

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 8668

E O. 11652: XGDS4

TAGS: PINS, SHUM, CI

SUBJECT: CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS: CCURRENTLY TRANQUIL

REF: A) SANTIAGO 8626 B) SANTIAGO 8567

1. SUMMARY: SENIOR CHURCH LEADER DESCRIBED CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS AFTER RELEASE OF PRIESTS AS "TRANQUIL." BASIS FOR CONFLICT NEVERTHELESS REMAINS, AND HE SEES INTERIOR MINISTER BENAVIDES AS A MAJOR IRRITANT. END SUMMARY.

2 CATHOLIC VICAR GENERAL FOR SANTIAGO BISHOP VALECH DEC 24 TOLD EMBOFF THAT WITH GOC'S RELEASE OF DETAINED PRIESTS (REF A), CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS ARE FOR MOMENT TRANQUIL. BASIC PROBLEMS HAVE NOT BEEN RESOLVED, HOWEVER, AND THERE WILL BE CONSTANT IRRITATIONS AS LONG AS PRESENT INTERIOR MINISTER, GENERAL BENAVIDES, REMAINS. VALECH SAID BENAVIDES IS RIGID, DOCTRINARE, AND STUBBORN MAN WHO REFUSES TO SEEK COMPROMISES IN MUTUAL INTEREST. WHEN CHURCH CAN GET TO PRESIDENT PINOCHET, HOWEVER, SUCH COMPROMISES ARE OFTER POSSIBLE.

3. CARDINAL SILVA IN HIS DEC 22 MEETING WITH PINOCHET SPOLE FRANKLY ABOUT HIS RECENT TRIP TO US AND EUROPE. TOLD PINOCHET OF CHILE'S POOR IMAGE ABROAD, AND OF SUPPORT GIVEN CHURCH IN CHILE BY CATHOLIC AND OTHER RELIGIOUS LEADERS ABROAD. HE EMPHASIZED CHURCH'S CONCERN FOR SACRIFICES IMPOSED ON CHILEANS
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 SANTIAGO 08668 241832Z

BY ECONOMIC AUSTERITY.

4. CARDINAL ALSO PUT TO PINOCHET PROBLEM OF DETAINED PEACE COMMITTEE PEOPLE WHO WERE NOT RELEASED IN CHRISTMAS AMNESTY. VALECH WAS CHAGRINED THAT IT HAD NOT BEEN POSSIBLE TO EFFECT THEIR RELEASE ALONG WITH PRIESTS; HE HAD TRIED TO GET THEM INCLUDED, BUT NEWS OF HIS NEGOTIATIONS WITH PINOCHET'S INTER-MEDIARY LEAKED, AND INTERIOR MINISTER, HE SAID, BLOCKED THEIR RELEASE.

5. IN CHRISTMAS MESSAGE PUBLISHED DEC 24, CARDINAL CALLED UPON GOC TO GRANT GENERAL AMNESTY, PARTICULARLY TO THOSE DETAINED BECAUSE OF PAST POLITICAL OPINIONS OW WHO CANNOT BE ACCUSED OF CRIMINAL ACTS OR VIOLATION OF LAW. STATEMENT SAID AMNESTY WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO NEEDED RECONCILIATION OF CHILEANS, BUT IN ADDITION A NEW CLIMATE OF AMNESTY AND PEACE WAS NEEDED TO BRING ABOUT AUTHENTIC RECONSTRUCTION OF CHILE. VALECH COMMENTED THAT STATEMENT WAS PURPOSELY LOW KEY BUT POINTED. CHURCH HOPED GOC WOULD EXTEND CHRISTMAS AMNESTY BY GRANTING ADDITIONAL ONE FOR NEW YEAR.

6. VALECH ASKED ABOUT STATEMENTS IN CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE BY HOLY CROSS PRIESTS DEVLIN AND PANCHOT, WHICH HAD BEEN PUBLICIZED IN SANTIAGO PRESS. HE SAID THE TWO PRIESTS SHOWED LAMENTABLE LACK OF PERSPECTIVE IN RECOMMENDING THAT US ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO CHILE OF ANY SORT BE RESTRICTED. CHURCH WAS UNHAPPY WITH GOC ECONOMIC POLICY BUT DID NOT WANT ANYTHING DONE THAT WOULD MAKE LOT OF CHILEANS MORE DIFFICULT.

7. FINALLY, VALECH REFERRED TO SEVERAL ALLEGED KILLINGS OF EXTREMISTS BY GOC FORCES (REF B). HE IDENTIFIED THE TWO MIR MEMBERS (PARA EIGHT, REF B) AS JOSE HERNAN CARRASCO AND HUMBERTO MENANTEAUX ACEITUNO (THEY, TOGETHER WITH TWO OTHER CAPTURED MIRISTAS, APPEARED ON CHILEAN TV LAST FEBRUARY 19--SANTIAGO 1178). VALECH HAD SEEN ONE OF THEM, WHO WAS TRYING TO FIND WAY OUT OF CHILE AFTER GOC RELEASED HIM. VALECH SAID THAT HE HAD BEEN PRESSING GOC TO EXTENT OF HIS ABILITY TO CLARIFY FACTS IN REPORTED CASES, AS WELL AS ANOTHER ALLEGED DEATH OF A UNIVERSITY OF CHILE PROFESSOR.

8. COMMENT: VALECH IS APT IN HIS DESCRIPTION OF INTERIOR MINISTER
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 SANTIAGO 08668 241832Z

BENAVIDES, WHO HAS INDEED PUT OBSTACLES IN THE WAY OF REASONABLE SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS. IT IS BENAVIDES WHO SEEMS TO HAVE PREVENTED RELEASE OF BRITISH CITIZEN SHEILA CASSIDY BEFORE CHRISTMAS. CHURCH-STATE DIFFICULTIES GO DEEPER THAN THIS, HOWEVER. THEY WILL NOT BE OVERCOME WITHOUT A MAJOR CHANGE IN GOC ORIENTATION.
POPPER

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRISONERS RELEASE, RELIGIOUS LEADERS, CHURCH STATE RELATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 DEC 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975SANTIA08668
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X4
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750447-0865
From: SANTIAGO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19751211/aaaaajkf.tel
Line Count: 113
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 SANTIAGO 8626, 76 SANTIAGO 8567
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08 SEP 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <08 SEP 2003 by ElyME>; APPROVED <19 NOV 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS: CCURRENTLY TRANQUIL
TAGS: PINS, SHUM, CI
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006